

POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR WILTSHIRE AND SWINDON AND
CHIEF CONSTABLE OF WILTSHIRE POLICE

Joint Independent Governance, Risk and Audit Committee

Meeting minutes: Thursday 25th June 2026, 14:00 - 17:00

Devizes HQ – Gold Room

• **Present:**

Name	Role
Mr. Keith Bellamy (KB)	Audit Chairperson
Mrs. Caroline Baynes (CB)	Audit Member
Mr. James Colquhoun (JC)	Audit Member
Mr. Alex Blair (AB)	Audit Member – Deputy Chair

• **In Attendance:**

Name	Role
Mr. Philip Wilkinson OBE (PCC)	Police & Crime Commissioner
Mr. Naji Darwish (ND)	OPCC CEO
CC Catherine Roper (CR)	Chief Constable
DCC Mark Cooper (MC)	Deputy Chief Constable
Mr. Graham Papworth	Chief Finance Officer (CFO) - OPCC
Mr. Robert Thomas (RT)	Chief Finance Officer (CFO) - Force
Ms. Charlotte Wilson (CW)	Internal auditors: SWAP
Mr. Jake Sibbert (JS)	Internal auditors: SWAP (observing only)
Mr. James Griffin (JG)	Head of Strategy, Performance & Oversight
Gemma Kelly (GK)	OPCC Head of Business & Public Services

1. **Apologies noted:**

Name	Role
Ms. Karin Gray (KG)	Audit Member
John Derryman (JD)	Chief of Corporate Services
Mr. Mark Bartlett (MB)	External audit: Bishop Flemming
Mr. Craig Sullivan (CS)	External audit: Bishop Flemming
Steven Payne (SP)	Insurance & Litigation Supervisor

Meeting notes generated by AI - checked by Gemma Kelly for accuracy

2. **Declarations of Interest**

Welcome and introductions given. There were no declarations of interest.

3. **Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes were approved and signed as a correct record of the meeting held on 19 March 2026.

Part 1: Exclusion of Public – OFFICIAL SENSITIVE

Part 1 - Exclusion of Public In accordance with Standing Order 6 of the Committee's Standing Orders to exclude the public from the meeting for the business specified because it is likely that if a member of the public were present there would be disclosure to them of exempt information (information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation, or prosecution of crime) of Appendix 2 of the Committee's Standing Orders

Signed:



Committee Chair Keith Bellamy

Date:

14/9/20

Part 2: Items to be considered whilst the meeting is open to the public.

7. Outstanding Actions

All actions were noted as agenda items for September's meeting with ND pointing out that the action on Estate strategy was likely to be impacted by external factors and may therefore slip to the right. KB accepted this and said he would much prefer to take the action when the strategy was fully defined and therefore the September target for the JIGRAC was not set in concrete.

8. Police and Crime Commissioner Update

PW outlined strategic uncertainties affecting policing, including devolution, potential changes to police force structures and wider governance reform. The meeting noted the progress of the English devolution bill, the anticipated disestablishment of the PCC role and the current lack of clarity regarding future governance arrangements.

Members discussed the potential implications of police reform, including possible force mergers and the reduction in the number of police forces nationally. The continued importance of local service delivery, neighbourhood policing and resource allocation was highlighted.

The meeting noted continuing pressures arising from the funding formula, increased demand and new government targets. PW highlighted the longstanding disparity between Wiltshire's per capita funding and the national average, and the challenges this presents for a predominantly rural force.

It was noted that the PCC and Chief Constable continue to engage with national bodies, MPs and the Home Office to advocate for Wiltshire's interests, particularly in relation to funding, the risks of centralisation and the need to preserve, inter alia, effective local policing functions.

9. Chief Constable Update

The meeting received an update from CR on the force's revised operational priorities: safer public spaces, reducing violence against women and girls, and improving outcomes for victims. It was noted that the priorities had been reviewed in light of crime statistics, community feedback, the Police and Crime Plan and national requirements.

MC advised that the performance framework had been realigned to measure operational delivery against the revised priorities, incorporating national requirements and feedback from the HMICFRS inspection.

The meeting considered the latest HMICFRS inspection outcomes. It was noted that the force received a mixture of adequate and good ratings across eight inspection areas. Strengths were identified in neighbourhood policing, use of powers and community engagement. Areas requiring improvement included investigation outcomes, victim services and safeguarding.

The force has established an audit and assessment team to monitor performance and support continuous improvement. Work is ongoing to address inspection recommendations and strengthen investigative standards and safeguarding practice.

JC asked whether there had been any surprises in the final HMICFRS publication. CR

confirmed there were none and noted constructive engagement with HMI during consultation, including refinements to the report where appropriate. CR confirmed that the timing of the next PEEL inspection is not yet known, although data collection may begin in spring. While the force would be ready, additional time to embed transformation and efficiencies would be beneficial.

The Committee accepted CR's assessment that steady and hard fought progress had been made over the past two years which is reflected in Wiltshire's growing reputation. It was also noted there was still much to be done to ensure these gains and others yet to be delivered, add to the continuous improvement regime which is central to policing delivery.

KB asked for a progress update on the Target Operating Model. MC updated that the Chief of Corporate Services is leading on this and noted the three critical areas, crime desk capability, video response capability and response capability. The next reporting schedule is in 4 weeks. A more detailed update will follow.

10. Annual Statement of Accounts

The Committee noted the Draft Statement of Accounts is deferred to September 2026.

11. External Auditor Bishop Fleming Quarterly Update

There was no requirement for an update at this meeting.

12. Internal Audit, annual opinion and audit activity reports

CW provided an update on recent internal audit activity. The Committee noted that two audits, covering failure to prevent fraud and storage and asset security, had received limited assurance. The storage and asset security audit identified a high organisational risk, with management accepting the findings and initiating actions to strengthen controls.

KB, on behalf of the committee, accepted the quarterly report as presented, noting that there appeared to be a disconnect between the number of actions contained in the report and that recorded on the SWAP audit board. CW acknowledged that there was an inconsistency, largely because of a timeline clash between audit closure and audit board updating, which is in the process of being corrected.

KB raised the longstanding issue of the need to improve audit action tracking and assurance processes. CW outlined the development of a new protocol for updating, monitoring and reporting audit actions. The enhanced process is in the course of being formalised with management. In parallel with these developments RT and GW have jointly reviewed the long list of outstanding internal audit recommendations, removing those overtaken by events or no longer relevant – the updated list has been forwarded to SWAP for comment – CW will review and report during the next quarterly update in September.

Action: CW to confirm or not the acceptance of the revised list of outstanding internal audit recommendations at the next meeting.

The annual audit opinion for 2025/26 was reported as limited assurance. This reflected recurring themes including governance, risk assessment, management information and control implementation. Positive progress was noted in areas such as financial monitoring and ICT asset management.

In response to a question from AB about the importance of ensuring control accounts are reconciled, RT and GP accepted that this was a crucial area and needed to be resolved quickly. Lack of capacity and the absence of the necessary skill sets were at the root of the problem. However, recent recruitment and restructuring was expected to bring early improvements in both capability and delivery thereby ensuring that core financial controls are consistently applied and monitored.

In response to a further query from KB on the 2025/26 audit plan completion rate, CW confirmed that the reported 79% would rise to 89% when planning, reporting and advice activity was included, with remaining audits expected to be completed before the next meeting.

The Committee duly accepted the annual report with its Limited Opinion (for the second consecutive year) noting that this opinion would need to be recorded in the Annual Governance Statement which forms part of the 2025/26 Draft Accounts. The JIGRAC also expressed thanks to CW for both reports.

13. Insurance assurance report

The annual insurance report was considered. Members requested greater clarity on the total cost of claims compared with net paid amounts in order to better understand the drivers of insurance premium increases. It was noted that market conditions and the timing of data provision had influenced recent premium changes.

The Committee noted ongoing work to explore a more collaborative regional approach to insurance provision, including the potential centralisation of insurance administration to improve efficiency, data consistency and risk management. A business case is being developed and discussions with Chief Finance Officers are continuing.

AB observed that net figures for claims did not provide the Committee with sufficient visibility of the direction of travel in terms of claims and costs – it was agreed with RT that future reports would show both gross and net costs, ideally showing the prior year figures for comparison purposes.

Action: Insurance reporting: Members requested that future reporting include both gross and net claims figures to provide greater clarity on the factors driving insurance costs and premium movements.

The Committee noted the report.

14. Updated Counter Fraud report

RT outlined improvements in fraud controls and reporting, including the introduction of “no purchase order, no pay” controls, the commissioning of a deeper audit by SWAP and work to improve procurement and supplier management.

Action: Counter Fraud Risk updates: Regular updates on principal fraud risks will be provided every six months starting in November 2026.

The Committee duly noted the much improved report including the commitment to provide the JIGRAC with regular reports on fraud and related matters.

15. Annual JIGRAC Statement

In presenting the Chair's annual report KB confirmed there were no issues or concerns other than continuing the process of rebuilding trust. Officials accepted the report as written.

16. Value for Money

The meeting reviewed the value for money report presented by RT and noted improvements in efficiency and benchmarking. Transformation projects, workforce planning and capital investment were identified as contributing to improved efficiency and value for money.

Members discussed the limitations of current funding and reporting frameworks, noting that

policing is demand-led but that the funding formula does not adequately reflect demand, resource availability or the costs of service delivery. The particular challenges of rural policing were highlighted, including the greater impact of crime in isolated communities and the additional complexity of providing services across dispersed areas. The Committee noted that reform may provide an opportunity to address these issues. The value for money report was welcomed as a significant improvement in assurance and clarity and duly noted by members.

KB thanked RT for the report and noted that it represented the strongest value for money report presented to JIGRAC to date.

17. Outstanding Internal Audit Recommendations

The Committee noted improvements in the process for monitoring outstanding audit recommendations, while observing that some historic recommendations remained unresolved for a significant period. Members emphasised the need for the revised process to support more timely delivery.

AB raised a concern regarding unreconciled control accounts; RT advised that finance capacity and capability issues had contributed to the position, but that recent restructuring and recruitment had strengthened the team. It was confirmed that control account reconciliation was improving and was not the main cause of delay to the draft accounts. CW advised that internal audit would review evidence of implementation where relevant, particularly for higher-priority actions.

The Chair noted the progress being made and thanked RT and GP for the report.

18. Date of Future Meetings

- Tuesday 14th Sept 2026 14:00 – 17:00
(13:00 – 14:00 Statement of Accounts - CFO and JIGRAC members only)
- Monday 30th November 2026 14:00 – 17:00
- Thursday the 18th March 2027 14:00 – 17:00

Signed:



Committee Chair Keith Bellamy

Date:

14/9/26

